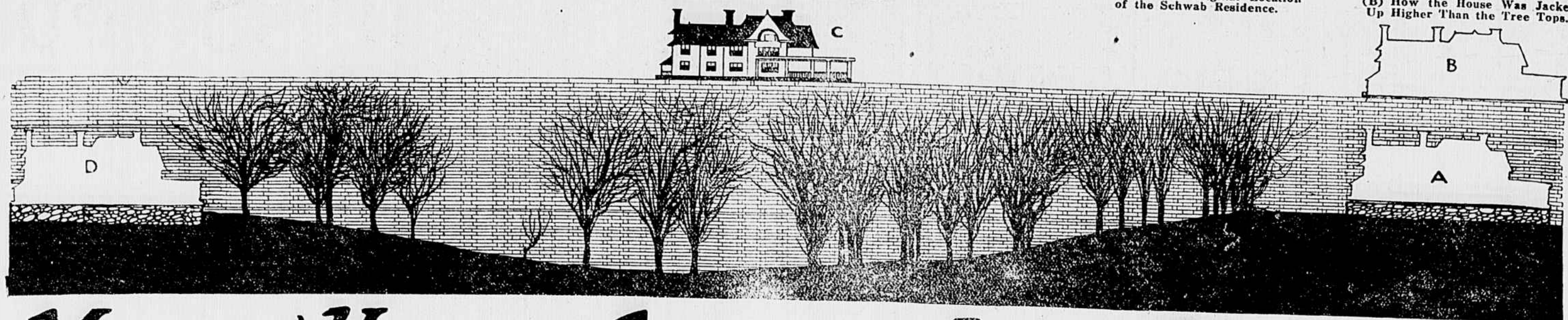


(D) Where the House Will Be Set Down.

(C) The House at Present Being Carried Along on Bridge Work Over the Trees.

(A) Shows the Original Location of the Schwab Residence.

(B) How the House Was Jacked Up Higher Than the Tree Tops.



Moving Houses Around Like Checkers

Charles M. Schwab's Sentimental Extravagance in Shifting About Three Old Buildings Over the Tree Tops of His Summer Estate Like Aladdin and the Genie

THE Titans of mythology didn't call it a day's work unless they had juggled a few mountains and made over a considerable area of landscape. For fun they played football with convenient hills. When thirsty they drank a river or two and thought nothing about it.

In these days Titans are scarce. The nearest approach to one seems to be Charles M. Schwab. Not so much in the way of a day's work, perhaps, though the steel magnate has quite a reputation in that regard; but in his habits of recreation. Being of an original turn of mind, Mr. Schwab leaves the mountains where they are, respects the hills for their natural beauty and encourages the rivers to go on flowing. Instead of juggling with salient features of the landscape, as the Titans did, he is content to toss houses about from one hill-top to another.

A Titanic Game of Checkers.

At this present moment Mr. Schwab is playing a titanic game of checkers with full-size houses for the pieces and a Pennsylvania landscape for a checkerboard. Of course, he doesn't actually toss houses about with his own hands, any more than he personally fashions armor plate for the U. S. Government or guns and shells to keep the European war going. He simply plans the moves in the game and his engineers and an army of workmen do the rest.

"Move the big house from its little hill over onto the big hill," says Mr. Schwab. And the engineers proceed to go about it.

"The next move," says Mr. Schwab, "is to move the little house from the big hill over to the medium-sized hill."

"Very good, Mr. Schwab," and the engineers hire some more workmen.

"After that," says the steel man, "you can move Paddy Moran's house over into the next valley; it's out of the game."

While the engineers figure on the details of this new move Mr. Schwab remarks:

"By the by, don't disturb any trees in making these moves."

"But the trees are in the way, Mr. Schwab," protest the startled engineers.

"That's all right," says the steel man, who has just received a cable from a European government ordering more explosive shells. "Jack up the houses and skid them over the tops of the trees—they're only thirty feet high."

"But, Mr. Schwab, the cost?"

"Oh, that's all right; turn in your bill."

And the steel man boards his private car at Cresson, Pa., and is off to the Bethlehem steel mills for the day's work.

The best part of this story is its entire lack of exaggeration. Mr. Schwab is actually playing this titanic game of checkers out near Loretto, Pa., where he owns some square miles of hilly landscape and is preparing to build a great stone mansion on the erstwhile site of his former, more modest, yet spa-

cious, country home.

Probably most men would have had the latter torn down to clear the ground for its successor; but Mr. Schwab would not hear of such a thing. Ever since he was elevated to a place among the elect in Mr. Carnegie's employ he and his family have spent months of each summer in this old summer home. For the sake of these associations, Mr. Schwab will preserve the huge frame structure on another hilltop site several hundred yards to the westward, where it will serve as a home for some near relations.

Right here is where the titanic game of checkers started, but the new site for the old mansion was occupied by the comfortable cottage of the superintendent of "Immergrun," as Mr. Schwab's handsome estate at Loretto is named. First, the superintendent's cottage had to be moved to a third convenient knoll.

The third "piece" in the game was the rather humble frame structure known in that part of Pennsylvania as the "Paddy" Moran home. There is yet a fourth "piece" of strategic importance on this landscape checkerboard—the old Benzelle hotel, built nearly a hundred years ago—and Mr. Schwab is "moving" them like the others.

Also Moved a Township Road.

These two pieces of property Mr. Schwab bought, not only because he wanted to add the land to his estate, but because the old buildings would obscure the view, both from the grand new mansion and from the old summer home on its new site.

And here is where the steel man had to perform a feat somewhat allied to that of the Titans when they quenched their thirst to the obliteration of a river or two. These properties, newly acquired, were separated from the Schwab home and vast lawn by a long-established township road. Townships are notoriously jealous of their roads. But the man of steel and titanic ideas of tossing houses about got around the supervisors in characteristic manner. If they would abandon the road which cut his estate in two, he would pay the entire cost of making a new road elsewhere entirely of asphalted macadam. They would. And by next spring the new road will be completed.

Having concluded this deal, Mr. Schwab refreshed himself by tossing out of the way half a dozen incidental small houses and shops, which he had previously overlooked, and which, his vivid imagination assured him, would be blots on the reformed landscape of which the great new stone mansion would be the centre.

This brings the story up to its

really titanic climax. Ordinary mortals, in moving their houses, stick to the solid ground. Mr. Schwab moves his through the air, as the crow flies—at an expense which scandalizes the moving contractors. The true reason illustrates an engaging bit of sentiment which most people probably would expect to find in the personification of Wall Street's most skyrocketing "War Stock."

As he charged the contractors' engineers, the moving in each instance was to be accomplished without cutting down, or in any way injuring, a tree or the Schwab vineyards. And the routes for ordinary moving on terra firma were covered with trees and vines. It was a case—to paraphrase—"Mover-man, spare those trees; touch not a single bough. In youth they shaded me, and I'll protect them now."

"Jack 'em up and skid 'em over," said Mr. Schwab, as above quoted. The natives of that region, who know Mr. Schwab so well they call him "Charlie" to his face, have memorized this laconic order and quote it with evidences of keen enjoyment to every newcomer.

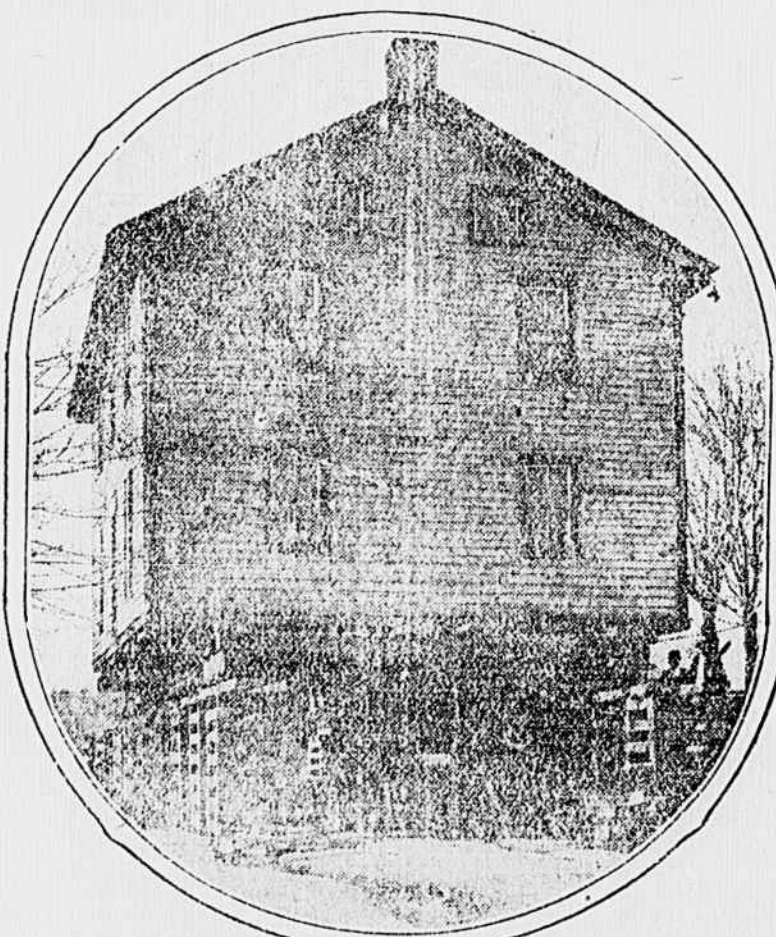
"Charlie's" Game Tickles the Natives. "That's Charlie all over," they declare. "Do it, an' hang the expense—that's Charlie Schwab's way. Jackin' up all them there houses, buildin' long trestles, an' skidden 'em off through the air will cost Charlie forty thousand dollars, maybe more—but what does he care?"

It appears that "Charlie" was careless when he told the engineers the trees were only thirty feet high. When the workmen got the old home jacked up that high, and the structure was wobbling on its stilts, they found that a further rise of seven feet would be necessary to clear the tops of some North Carolina poplars. Now, the farmers of the surrounding neighborhood hold a very low opinion of these trees, which so infected the moving gang; that one of the workmen grabbed a saw and shortened one of them by the amount of those seven interfering feet.

That workman was promptly discharged, and it is said that the moving contractor is still sweating for fear that Mr. Schwab's inspector will carry out his threat to make him pay a heavy penalty for disobeying orders to spare the trees. From that time on when ever a foot more of tree stood in the way of a moving house the house simply went up a foot higher into the air.

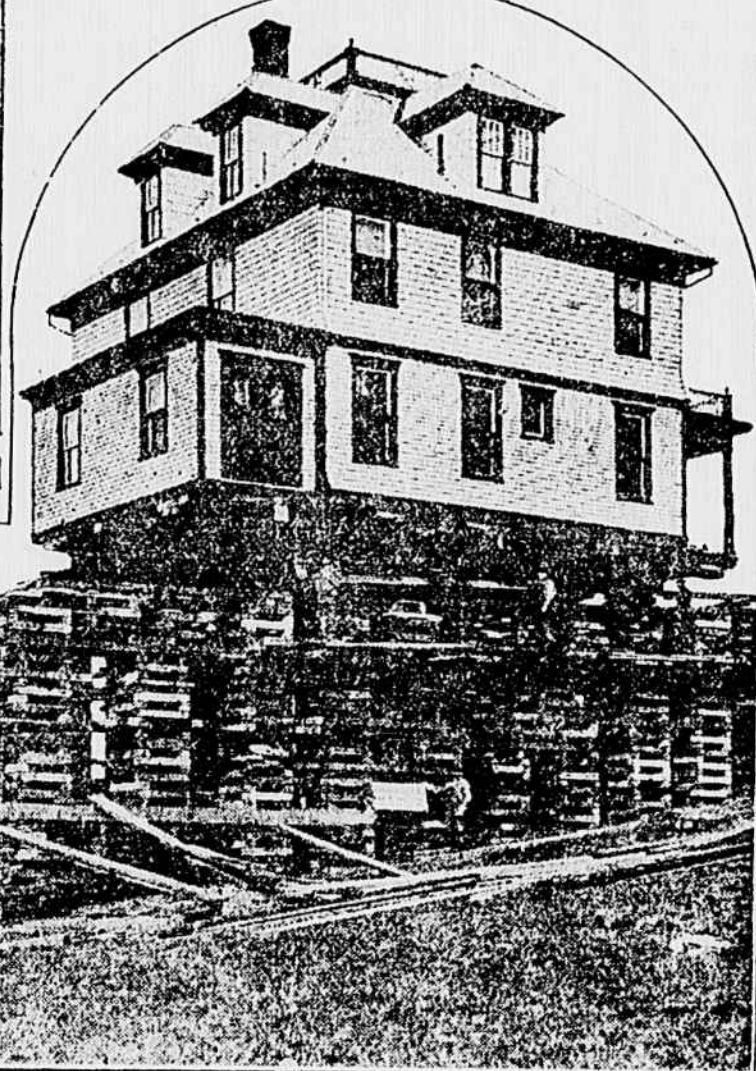
There are many trees between the two locations and it was some time before a contractor was found who would guarantee to raise the house to a height which would

The Old "Paddy" Moran House Which Is Being Moved a Quarter Mile Because It Interferes With the Entrance to the Schwab Estate.



on a Checker Board

The Home of Mr. Schwab's Farm Superintendent Which Is Being Moved to Another Location Because Mr. Schwab Wants to Put His Old Residence on the Very Spot Where This Farmhouse Was Located.



clear the vegetation and insure the safety of the big structure itself. George Eichleay, Jr., Pittsburgh, finally got the contract. The thousands of blocks used in the construction of trestles were shipped from Pittsburgh to Loretto Road station and thence hauled overland to "Immergrun."

Three weeks were required to get the house from its foundation to the first trestles. It was raised 10 feet from the ground and under its entire length steel channels were placed. The wood-block columns are interlocked and strengthened every 20 feet by steel girders connecting the two bridges. A horse-pulled windlass near the original foundations of the house provides the power for moving. About 40 feet a day is the distance covered, but this will be increased when the house reaches the new hill location, and goes up hill instead of down.

Workmen have been careful to keep the house under control, because of the winter winds which sweep across the Allegheny Mountains at Loretto. During a gale ten days ago the house awayed from side to side and the contractors feared their trestlework might collapse. Shoring hastily erected removed that danger.

To move the house of the farm superintendent meant a greater engineering feat than the removal of the "big house." Between the new and old locations of the cottage is a large grove of oak and

maple trees, part of the old deer park. Mr. Schwab insisted that not even the limb of the smallest of these trees be injured in any way. From the grove the ground sloped away to a little valley and it was necessary to take the cottage 100 yards down into the hollow, 150 yards along the bottom of the ravine, and then almost a hundred yards up the hillside to the new foundation.

The township road is not the only highway work Mr. Schwab proposes to build. When he travels by automobile from Cresson to Loretto he first traverses three miles of macadam road built by the State and then two and a half miles of rocky township road which wrecks autos and robs travelers of comfort. Mr. Schwab has offered to macadam this two and a half miles at a cost of approximately \$30,000, the work to be done under the direction of the State Highway Department of Pennsylvania. This improvement will be taken up in the spring.

When the new "Immergrun" is completed the stone Schwab castle will be 200 yards from a main highway, hidden behind a screen of verdure which will have cost its owner perhaps \$10,000 to retain. Cresson and the private car will be ten or twelve minutes away by automobile, instead of twenty-five minutes.

And "Charlie" Schwab will have played the most remarkable game of checkers on record.